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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5520
INFO RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 1663
RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUCNSOM/SOMALIA COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 000204

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/09/2018

TAGS: [PREL](#) [KPKO](#) [UNSC](#) [SO](#) [FR](#)

SUBJECT: P-3 SHARE UNSC, UNESCO, HRC AND DURBAN CONCERNS

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Katherine H. Allegrone. Re
asons 1.4b,d

¶1. (C) Summary: Acting IO A/S Jim Warlick joined French IO A/S-Equivalent Sylvie Bermann and UK IO Director Paul Johnston, along with MFA IO PDAS-Equivalent Marc Giacomini, IO DAS-Equivalent Fabien Penone, and Pol M/C for a P-3 exchange of views on February 6. Among topics of note, France led the agenda with a push for UNSC expansion, championing the idea of interim permanent members; advised that the USG must explain anew to Egypt its views of Hosni's candidacy for UNESCO DG; expressed exasperation at preparatory proceedings for Durban II; and laid down a marker of dissatisfaction about the handling of UN financing for AMISOM. Johnston advised UK difficulties on Durban II might prompt the UK to pull out; he joined Bermann in appealing for greater USG involvement at the Human Rights Council. Acting IO A/S Warlick shared misgivings on Durban II, but noted that the decision on how to proceed is under review; he also highlighted stresses within the UNSC sanctions process and expressed concern at the implications of European Court of Justice decisions alleging inadequate respect for due process. Warlick said the USG would conduct a comprehensive policy review on a number of UN-related issues. End Summary.

France tees up UNSC Expansion

¶2. (C) UNSC expansion was vitally important, as stated publicly by President Sarkozy, according to MFA IO A/S-Equivalent Bermann. To move discussion forward, France has proposed adding candidates for permanent membership on a interim basis, pending review. Brazil and Germany were open to some kind of interim approach, though India was reluctant; none wanted their accession to a permanent seat conditioned on performance. Johnston volunteered that the UK and France had to be proactive on the principle of UNSC expansion, if only to deflect negative scrutiny of their own status as veto-wielding permanent members. Nonetheless, Johnston noted UK interest in UNSC reform might appear to flag temporarily amid the focus on the economic crisis, though a global restructuring of international finance might paradoxically draw attention to the present UNSC as obsolete. Bermann fervidly agreed, commenting "Every time we send a memo to President Sarkozy, we state the need to address both (economic and security reforms) in parallel." She noted that German Chancellor Merkel had proposed a kind of UNSC for econ affairs, though Johnston underscored Merkel's statement had seen no concrete follow-up.

¶3. (C) Acting A/S Warlick, while emphasizing USG policy on security council reform would undergo comprehensive review, commented that interim UNSC members might play to the G-77 in order to guarantee their subsequent election as permanent members. Warlick also cautioned at trying to determine additional permanent members on a regional basis, noting some nations, i.e. Japan or Germany, might qualify in terms of

global contributions. Bermann concurred on the challenges of regional representation, pinpointing Africa in particular. She alluded to political volatility in Africa by relating a favored anecdote about how Zimbabwe and Cote d'Ivoire would have been the leading contenders in the 90s for a permanent African seat at the UNSC. She added that Sarkozy's call for permanent members from the Arab world as well as Africa was due to Egyptian pressure.

UNESCO DG: Talk to Egypt, Again

¶4. (C) Bermann said the USG needed once again to explain its position clearly to Egypt, which was hoping the Obama administration would have a different take on the DG candidacy of Egyptian Cultural Affairs Minister Farouk Hosni.

She candidly addressed French internal challenges stemming from Sarkozy's alleged pledge of support to Mubarak (Ref) prior to Egypt's formally designating Hosni. She noted PM Fillon had relayed French concerns to Cairo. Egypt had asked France to refrain from public comment or other action until the new U.S. administration formulated its position, evidently hoping there would be a shift. Acting A/S Warlick replied Hosni's candidacy remained problematic but a policy review would determine next steps. It would be better to have a broader field of candidates, including an OIC alternative. Bermann noted the candidacy of former Algerian FM Bedjaoui, put forward, she noted without comment, by Cambodia. Johnston stated the UK, not being a UNESCO board member, did not have a vote; however, the UK also had concerns about Hosni, including his clear managerial

PARIS 00000204 002 OF 002

deficiencies, and would prefer alternative choices.

Durban II: What to do?

¶5. (C) Bermann expressed exasperation with preparatory work for Durban II and the prospect that the event, like its 2001 predecessor, the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, would devolve into baiting of Israel and demands for reparation of historical wrongs. She admitted that events in Gaza had inflamed French public opinion, complicating the MFA's margin for manoeuvre; France nonetheless had elected to engage with Durban II, while hewing to redlines on combatting anti-Semitism and the defamation of religion. Johnston said the UK was very preoccupied by Durban II and may consider dropping out. He added it would be ironic if the UK were to bail while the USG reversed policy and decided to participate.

Human Rights Council: Gone Awry but USG can Help

¶6. (C) All agreed the HRC was unbalanced, with Acting A/S Warlick stressing its inordinate preoccupation with Israel. Bermann and Johnston admitted the HRC was worse than the preceding Human Rights Commission. Bermann, seconded by Johnston, appealed for USG participation, saying the USG presence could help in protecting Israel against disproportionate criticism. Bermann added that France and Mexico were in continuing consultations about how to fix the HRC, both in terms of balance and efficiency.

AMISOM: Wrong to Out-Source Peacekeeping

¶7. (C) Bermann twice criticized the call for UNSC financing of AMISOM. France had yielded to pressure for a support

package to AMISOM only to then be told the cost would tally USD 600 million, Bermann complained. It was unacceptable for the AU to presume SC financing; there needed to be an active SC decision. IO DAS-Equivalent for Peacekeeping and Sanctions Penone affirmed the need for expert outside assessments of cost and feasibility. Bermann decried what she called the outsourcing of peacekeeping operations, baldly stating, "We disagree." Such an approach, she predicted, will generate PKOs doomed to failure and which fail to protect human rights. Rehatting the AMISOM troops into a UN PKO was not a solution, she maintained, since the same weak troops would be on the ground. Johnston said UK Somalia experts believed an internal reordering of Somali politics was the first order of business and that a UN PKO could incite extremism in Somalia. Bermann agreed, supporting a political process was more important than deploying a PKO. She admitted there were internal divisions at the MFA with the AF bureau more supportive of AMISOM and a notional PKO; however, she reiterated the French IO view that conditions were wrong and dangerous for a PKO in Somalia, with long-term damage to UN peacekeeping generally a possible consequence.

UNSC Sanctions Process Under Stress

18. (C) Acting A/S Warlick explained the UNSC sanctions process was increasingly under stress, with listing and delisting methods functioning poorly. He asked further about the implications and complications stemming from the European Court of Justice ruling on the MEK which alleged an abrogation of due process and called for the right of individuals to challenge their sanctioning. He added that much of the documentation behind USG concurrence in individual sanctions cases entailed copious classified information that could not readily be made available. Johnston commented the UK was under additional pressure due to complaints in UK courts to mitigate the material hardship of families resulting from the sanctioning under UNSCR 1267 of heads of households through a process that vouchsafed no right of appeal.

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